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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/765,806	01/27/2004	Steven S. Homer	200312393-1	2458

22879 7590 12/14/2004

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EXAMINER

EDWARDS, ANTHONY Q

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2835

DATE MAILED: 12/14/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/765,806

Applicant(s)

HOMER ET AL.

Examiner

Anthony Q. Edwards

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 9-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3-8 and 14-19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 2 and 9-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,532,147 to Christ, Jr. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,700,773 to Andriaansen et al. ("Andriaansen" hereinafter). Referring to claim 1, Christ, Jr. discloses a computing device comprising a base (22), at least one center module disposed on and coupled to the base (see col. 3, lines 45-47), a lid (24), and a hinge structure (77) coupling the base (22) and the lid (24), the hinge structure having a variable height operable to enable the lid to close over the at least one center module. See Figs. 7-9 and col. 6, lines 20-28. Christ, Jr. lacks the at least one center module being removably disposed on the base. Andriaansen teaches providing at least one center module (143) removably coupled to a base (see Figs. 33-36).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to provide the base of Christ, Jr. with the removable center module disposed thereon, as taught by Andriaansen, since the device of Andriaansen would provide the computing device of Christ, Jr. with alternate modes of data input.

Referring to claim 2, Christ, Jr. in view of Andriaansen disclose a computing device, wherein the hinge structure is further operable to enable the lid to close over the base with the at least one removable center module removed from the base. As shown in Fig. 7 of Christ, Jr., the

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hinge structure is indeed operable as claimed, since the same or an even lesser amount of space is required when the removable center module is removed from the base.

Referring to claim 9, Christ, Jr. in view of Andriaasen disclose a computing device, wherein the hinge structure rotatively couples the lid to the base. See Fig. 10 of Christ, Jr.

Referring to claim 10, Christ, Jr. in view of Andriaasen disclose a computing device, further comprising a plurality of electrical components housed in the base, and the at least one removable center module is electrically connectable to the plurality of electrical components. See Figs. 35 and 36, as well as col. 16, lines 44-50 of Andriaason.

Referring to claim 11, Christ, Jr. in view of Andriaasen disclose a computing device, wherein the lid comprises a display screen. See col. 6, lines 7-16 of Christ, Jr.

Referring to claim 12, Christ, Jr. in view of Andriaasen disclose a computing device, wherein the at least one center module comprises a first center module (111) operable to be disposed on and coupled to the base and second center module (123) operable to be disposed on and releaseably coupled to the first center module (111). See Figs. 30-31 of Andriaasen. Christ, Jr. in view of Andriaasen also disclose a computing device having a hinge structure enabling the lid to close over the second center module. See Figs. 7 and 8 of Christ, Jr., wherein the display (24) may be positioned at various heights in relation to the base (22) to allow the lid to close over both center modules as claimed.

Although Adriaansen does not specifically teach the first center module (111) operable to be releaseably or removably coupled to the base, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to further modify the computing device of Christ, Jr. to

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include first and second center modules releaseably coupled to the base, since this would allow for a greater variety of input devices to be interchangeably utilized in the computing device.

Referring to claim 13, Christ, Jr. in view of Andriaasen disclose a computing device, a device comprising first (24) and second (22) portions (see Fig. 7 of Christ, Jr.), at least one removable center module (1430 disposed on and coupled to the second portion (see Figs. 33-36 of Andriaasen), and a hinge structure coupling the first and second portions, the hinge structure having a variable height operable to enable the first portion to close over at least one removable center module (see Figs. 7-9, as well as col. 6, lines 20-28 of Christ, Jr.).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3-8 and 14-19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: claims 3, 5, 6, 14, 15 and 16, respectively, are deemed to be directed to a non-obvious improvement over the prior art invention. The claims comprise the specific limitation of a hinge member comprising a clutch member disposed in the base. The prior art teachings require that the clutch member be disposed at a position outside the base (e.g., at the side of the base), in order for the hinge structure to be operable to close the lid over the removable module. These features, in combination with the rest of the elements or steps, are not taught or suggested by the prior art references. Claims 4 and 8 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 3 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons provided above. Claim 7 depends from claim 6 and is

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therefore allowable for at least the reasons provided above. Likewise, claims 17-19 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 16 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons provided above.

Conclusion

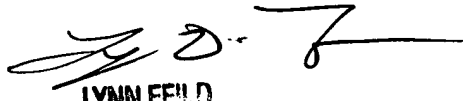
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: U.S. Patent No. 6,826,043 to Chang; U.S. Patent No. 6,556,435 to Helot et al.; U.S. Patent No. 6,384,811 to Kung et al.; and U.S. Patent No. 5,229,920 to Spaniol et al.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anthony Q. Edwards whose telephone number is 571-272-2042. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:30-3:00) First Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynn D. Feild can be reached on 571-272-2800, ext. 35. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

December 10, 2004
aqe


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